

Effectiveness of international efforts to ease problem of global hunger



Global hunger, as its name suggests, is a global issue that requires the assistance and cooperation of countries, regardless of nationality, wealth or religion, so as to find an effective solution. Many policies and efforts, both international and national, have been done, or presently underway to reduce poverty, which causes hunger. The good cause behind these efforts cannot be denied, however, one may doubt if the money pumped into them are potent enough to rapidly decrease the rate of hunger in a short period of time.

These efforts have made improvements to alleviate global hunger but more have to be done by the global community via sustainable and long term methods. This is an urgent matter to be solved. To have a strong and stable global environment and constant development, the unnerving imbalance of status, wealth, resources among countries must be overcome. The first step is to ensure food security. Families and individuals need a consistent source of nutritious quality food, with the ability to afford for it.

However, the solution is not as simple as increasing food production for the poor segments of society because its root cause, being unequal food distribution in the world, suggests that the political and socioeconomic ties among countries are main factors in this problem. First, Nation Anti-Hunger Organizations (NAHO) aims to develop agricultural sectors in developing nations to increase production of food to feed more mouths. In 2011, The Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative (GHGSI) program will be implemented in 20 countries identified for chronic hunger and potential for rapid agriculture-led growth.

One example is Rwanda whereby the government developed plans with priorities of irrigation, local seed research among others and representatives will discuss and support their plans financially. Emphasis on agriculture and effective use of resources developing nations can achieve two aims - boosting their economy and increase food production. These measures ensure crops can be exported and used and increasing agricultural productivity of farmers, so more food will be produced with the same amount of resources. However, this is based on the assumption that the government is fully supportive.

In December 2009, the Mali government approved long-term leases for foreign investors to develop large plots of land, at the expense of squeezing local farmers out of the market. Since export of food will give producers higher profits, the large amounts of food may not stay in the country and people will remain poor and hungry. Second, International organizations assist governments in developing countries in aims to reduce malnutrition levels among children. Ghana adopted a Ghana School Feeding Program (GSFP) with funding from World Food Program to work towards the Millennium's Development Goals.

This program can encourage children to enroll in schools and receive more nutritious food. This has achieved results as it has reached 476, 083 children in 947 schools 2 years after the program is implemented in 2006. However, such programs are only limited towards schooling children whereas there are more children who are unschooled and are in greater need of food.

Moreover, clean drinking water is also a problem in schools. According to a

GNA report by Social Enterprise Development Foundation (SEND), 43% of the beneficiary schools do not have access to safe drinking water.

This problem is not only seen in Ghana but also in other countries like as Chile, Mali and India. Without clean drinking water, children's health is still deeply compromised. Thus, the government should take into considerations of other factors concerning the health of people and counter them directly. Otherwise, ignorance of these problems will lead to the downfall of policies and efforts. Third, food aid given to developing countries by large producers such as U. S. and U. K. harms their economies and increases dependency of the recipient nations on them if used as a long term solution.

Most of the food aid carried out is program food aid whereby recipient nations purchase food with money borrowed from donor nations at lower than market interest rates. This will hurt economies of recipient nations as it promotes domestic interests of donor countries since it disrupts food markets in recipient countries. Introduction of food aid will cause prices to decrease such that local producers are unable to make profits at the same prices so sellers may leave the market, leading to a greater dependency on food aid. Thus, food aid should only be used for relief or project-based purposes.

Instead, donor countries should use funds and resources to create self-sustaining business and enterprises so that local producers can make profits and ensure the output will meet domestic demands for food. Fertile lands and natural resources are advantages which developing nations have and should develop and utilize so as to build a stronger agricultural market.

Forth, charity organizations gives large amounts of money yearly to governments of developing nations to increase amount of food supplies for the poor but accounting on the government's part is needed.

Millions of money is poured into the African governments yearly but the slow progression of their economies pushed doubts regarding the operations behind the handling of these large amounts of cash. Conflict-torn countries with long running civil wars such as Uganda have ineffective governance. The 2008 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) ranks Uganda at 126th place with a score of 2.6, which may be a main reason why the global hunger index of Uganda has only dropped from 19.1 in 1990 to 15.0 in 2010.

International organizations such as United Nations or charity organizations should emphasize on the accounting of governments so as to enforce anti-corruption. More efforts have to be put into eradicating poverty and reducing global hunger by the global community. Organizations and governments can encourage groups of people to do missionary work overseas by providing funding or loans so that everyone can play a part. Organizations which have supported in implementation of policies should monitor situations closely so as to push local governments to evaluate and improvise them overtime.

More effective policies with higher budgets can be made to tackle prevalence of infectious diseases so as to create a better living environment. Similar to the GHGSI program stated earlier, international organizations can support the development of infrastructures and businesses which can stimulate foreign investments so as to provide a stable income for the

country. One example is the FIFA World Cup 2010 held in South Africa, which induced high tourist rates which benefitted the economy.

In conclusion, international efforts have indeed played a part in reducing unger rates for past few decades in all parts of the world. However, eradicating poverty and hunger will need more efforts. As Secretary of State Hilary Clinton said, “ The most effective food security strategies come from those closest to the problems - not governments or institutions thousands of miles away. ” International organizations can only play the guiding or supporting role while local governments and national organizations play a bigger part in sustaining the existing policies and implementing better methods to reach the goal of global food security.